



# Times and Trails

People, Projects and Priorities

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## SPECIAL EDITION



Commissioner Jim Fyke



Deputy Commissioner  
Paul Sloan

### Staff:

While recent days have been extremely busy, I wanted to get out this special edition of *Times and Trails* introducing Paul Sloan to the entire department.

With a career that includes success in education, law, business and conservation advocacy, Paul represents the best combination of environmentalism and commerce. He is an entrepreneur who has built a company from the ground up. He has managed large numbers of employees and understands the challenges confronting businesses in the modern world.

Paul Sloan is also an environmentalist. He comes to the department from Partners-in-Conservation, a conservation investment organization he founded last year. He's a founding board member of Cumberland Region Tomorrow and a trustee of The Nature Conservancy. Paul was even driving a gasoline electric hybrid automobile — before they were a status symbol.

Paul has a systems approach to thinking about complex issues, and we certainly have plenty of complex issues. He is both practical and idealistic in considering how economics, the environment and society relate to each other. Paul will challenge us to think bigger and broader — how to balance the quality of life issues that are fundamental to making Tennessee such a great state to live, work and play.

His intellect and approach will be incredibly valuable to the department and me. But beyond his sharp mind and passion for protecting our natural resources, I'm most impressed with his humility and real interest in people. Paul is a genuinely good person — caring and compassionate. He seeks to understand first, and then figure out ways to make things better.

I'm confident we will be an effective team for the department and the citizens of Tennessee.

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## Bredesen names Fyke to lead Environment and Conservation Paul Sloan named Deputy Commissioner of Environment

On Thursday, April 14th, an overflow crowd filled the Old Supreme Court Chambers at the State Capitol to see Governor Phil Bredesen administer the oath of office to Jim Fyke as the new Commissioner for the Department of Environment and Conservation. "Jim Fyke is a highly respected manager who has the knowledge, experience and commitment to lead this important department," Governor Bredesen said. "Jim's life work has been dedicated to conservation and effective stewardship of our natural resources. I can think of no better advocate to lead this department."

Joined by his wife Becky and other family members, Jim told the audience, "I am honored by the confidence Governor Bredesen has shown in me. We have built a strong team and created a record of success in Parks and Conservation. My goal now is to encourage and grow the talent already present in other parts of the department."

When asked what makes Jim successful, Parks' Natural and Cultural Resource Management Director Charlie Tate noted, "Commissioner Fyke combines a common sense approach with a wealth of knowledge and experience. He seeks out staff input and is not afraid to hear all relevant points of view when he is sizing up a situation."

Governor Bredesen also used the occasion to announce Paul Sloan will join the department as Deputy Commissioner for Environment. Sloan — an educator, attorney, businessman and environmental leader — has a record of achievement across a range of innovative economic and conservation activities. "Paul Sloan is an environmentalist who understands the challenges of business and the opportunities it can provide," said Governor Bredesen. "He personifies the mission of balance that is so critical at Environment and Conservation. Paul and Jim will make a great team."

Sloan is no stranger to TDEC's issues. "Having worked with Paul Sloan on issues involving stream protection and roadbuilding in Williamson County, I know he brings both a practical sensibility and a personal passion to environmental problem solving,"



*l-r: Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan, Governor Phil Bredesen and Commissioner Jim Fyke at the swearing-in ceremony at the State Capitol.*



*l-r: Governor Bredesen, Shay Steel, Tracy Carter, Murray Crow and Mike Cole*

said Water Pollution Control Division Director Paul Davis. "I believe the department and our staff will respond positively to his energy and leadership."

The Governor's announcement was greeted by a sense of optimism from staff. "I look forward to working with Commissioner Fyke and Deputy Commissioner Sloan," said Johnson City Field Office Director Mark Braswell. "The department will benefit from Mr. Fyke's team approach and his proven ability to maximize the value of each employee. His calm, easy-going style is a quality employees will appreciate as we face future challenges."

Following an Earth Day event with Governor Bredesen at Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park on April 22nd, Jim and Paul will be visiting staff at various locations over the next few weeks.

## Governor Bredeesen joins staff at reception for Betsy Child

Following the swearing-in of Jim Fyke as Commissioner, the department hosted a farewell reception for outgoing Commissioner Betsy Child in the 17th floor conference room of the L&C Tower. For nearly two hours, staff came by to offer best wishes and enjoy refreshments provided by Tennessee State Parks.

A highlight of the event was having Governor Bredeesen stop by to thank Commissioner Child for her service and welcome Jim Fyke to his new role as Commissioner. At the reception, Governor Bredeesen made time to mingle with staff and sample the cake and ice cream being served.



*l-r: State Parks employees Randy Smalley, Andy Lyon, Ted Murdock and Mike Carlton*



*l-r: Glenda McCloud, State Parks, Herbert Harper, Tennessee Historic Commission and Governor Bredeesen*



*l-r: Cheryl Gracy, State Parks, Governor Bredeesen and Janie Conyers, Chief Administrative Officer to the Governor*



*l-r: Betsy Child, Susan Evans, Human Resources, and Rose Busby, Solid Waste Management*



*Governor Bredeesen and Chuck Head, Health and Safety Officer*

In recognition of Commissioner Child's tenure at the department, Commissioner Fyke presented her with a framed photo from the Pogue Creek section of Fentress County - adjacent to Pickett State Forest. This 3,720 acre land tract at Pogue Creek was recently acquired by The Nature Conservancy of Tennessee with the goal of turning it over to the State so the area could be managed for public use and benefit.



*Betsy Child with Charlie Tate and Andy Lyon, State Parks*

*Commissioner Fyke and Betsy Child admire the Pogue Creek photo.*





### A quick conversation with new Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan

During a busy first week on the job, Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan took a few moments to address some questions for *Times and Trails*...

**You bring a wide variety of life experiences to your new role. What are the most important lessons you have learned from your work in education, business, law and environmental advocacy?**

*A: Lesson one has been that things are often not as they seem.*

*Therefore the first step in any decision is to gather the facts and apply good science early on and to the fullest extent possible. The next lesson has been to work with good people. A third lesson is the importance of listening. It's hard to learn while talking.*

**What things excite you most about your new role as Deputy Commissioner?**

*A: The opportunity to contribute and work with a capable team whose mission is the well-being of our environment of which we are all a part.*

**What are some of the first things you want to do as you step into the Deputy Commissioner role?**

*A: Listen and learn, after which I hope to listen more and learn more. Change for change sake does not interest me. By listening, I hope to identify where and how I can be most helpful in my position as Deputy Commissioner of Environment. Ask me the question again in a month or two.*

**You are known for being a person who “lives by his beliefs.” What are the ways your lifestyle reflects the emphasis you put on environmental protection?**

*A: Thank you for the implication of that question. The truth is that I am far more mindful of where I fall short than where there are gains. The most important thing to me has been learning that it matters.*

**What is one thing you want TDEC staff to know about you?**

*A: That I have a great deal of respect for them and the work they do.*

**What is the most interesting job you have ever had?**

*A: Probably working on a towboat on the Mississippi many years ago. What an amazing river system.*

**What role does family play in your life?**

*A: Family is the keystone. Young children constantly remind all of us how critical it is to pass on to them a world whose waters, lands and air have been protected. It is their most precious inheritance.*

**What is the perfect day for you?**

*A: A perfect day is one in which good health enables you to have a hand in helping something good happen.*

**Is there anything else you want to share?**

*A: Yes — thanks to everyone for making me feel so welcome.*



Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan

Paul comes to TDEC from Partners-in-Conservation, a conservation investment organization he founded in 2004. He's a founding board member of Cumberland Region Tomorrow, a former trustee of The Nature Conservancy and the Cumberland River Compact. Paul started his career teaching both in Nashville and England; was a founding member of the Nashville law firm Harwell Barr Martin and Sloan (now the H3GM law firm); started and sold a health care and education services company while also developing a range of innovative conservation initiatives. Paul holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Williams College and a law degree from Vanderbilt University. He is husband to Margaret and father to three children: Ashley, Emma and Paul.